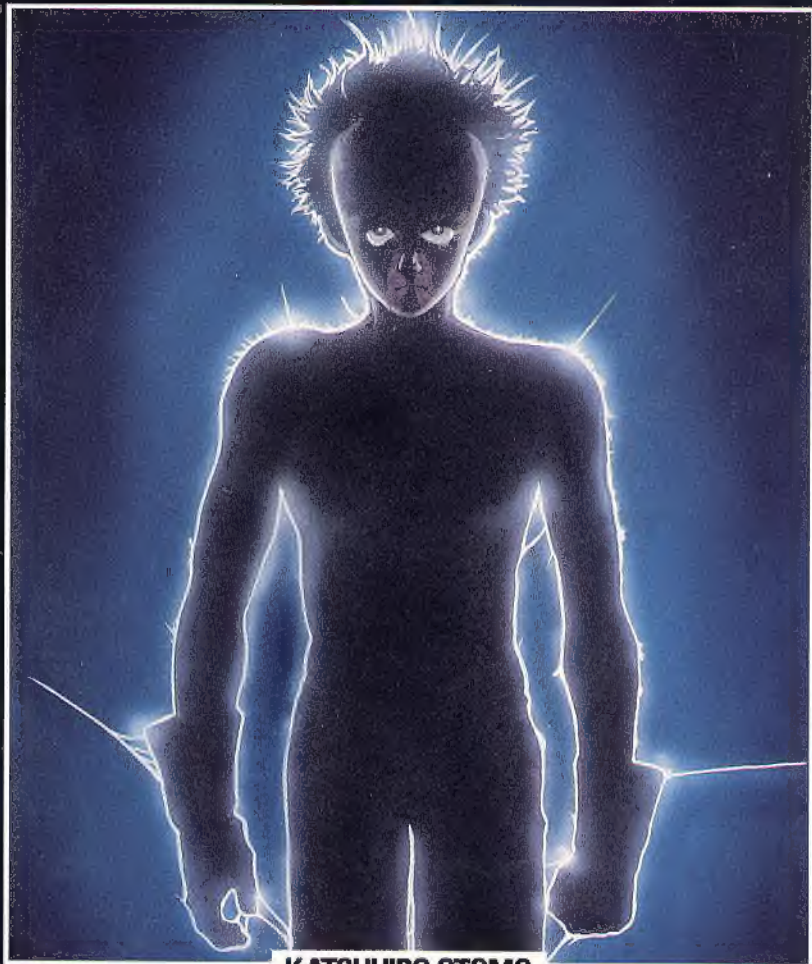



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KATSUHIRO OTOMO



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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 3

NUMBER 41!

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE



The year is 2030. The world is rebuilding from World War III. In **Neo-Tokyo**, plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell.

Kaneda and his friends—teenaged delinquents from the local vocational school—have made an unauthorized motor-

cycle run into the old city to check out the old site and found far more than they expected. In an area said to be totally deserted, they encounter a strange, wizened-faced child, known only as **Number 26**. He is terrified of something and is possessed of extraordinary telekinetic abilities. During the encounter, the paranormal boy gravely injures **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends. Then, he vanishes.

Kaneda's gang find themselves in serious trouble with the authorities following the incident, and they learn, to their surprise, that the "police" they encountered after the accident were not normal officers at all, but part of some secret concern. Moreover, **Tetsuo**, who they believed had been taken to a hospital, has disappeared.

The next night, at **Harukiya**, a tough local dive, **Kaneda** brazenly attempts to pick up **Kay**, a strange girl who catches his fancy. **Kay**, however, is not interested. In fact, she and her companion, **Ryu**, are part of an underground resistance organization, dedicated to learning what is happening in the old city and putting a stop to it.

During the mayhem that ensues, both the delinquents and



Kaneda



Tetsuo



Kay



Ryu



the resistance fighters again encounter **Number 26**, and again he uses his powers, to catastrophic effect. Both groups are scattered, but first **Ryu** and then **Kaneda** re-encounter **Number 26**. **Ryu** attempts to reassure the paranormal boy, but **Kaneda** is anxious to punish him for injuring **Tetsuo**.

As they argue, the mysterious soldiers pursuing **Number 26** reach the scene, armed and ready.

During the resulting firefight, **Kaneda** is separated from **Ryu** and **Number 26**, whom the soldiers are determined to recapture alive. **Kay** saves **Kaneda's** life, but **Ryu** and **Number 26** are cornered, and **Number 26** becomes increasingly ill, exhibiting all the symptoms of drug withdrawal. **Kaneda** returns the favor he owes the resistance

fighters by stealing a truck and heading back into the heart of the melee to save **Ryu** and **Number 26**.

That is when the mysterious **Colonel** in charge of the entire covert operation puts in an appearance, bringing forward his secret weapon—**Number 27**, a crippled paranormal child named **Masaru**.

Masaru astonishes the resistance fighters by addressing **Number 26** as **Takashi. Kay** and **Ryu** had previously assumed that **Number 26** was the Colonel's ultimate weapon—the as-yet unseen paranormal giant code-named **Akira**.

Kaneda provokes a crisis by pretending to be on the verge of killing **Takashi**, and **Takashi** responds to the stress this causes by telekinetic upheavals that virtually destroy the entire



Takashi



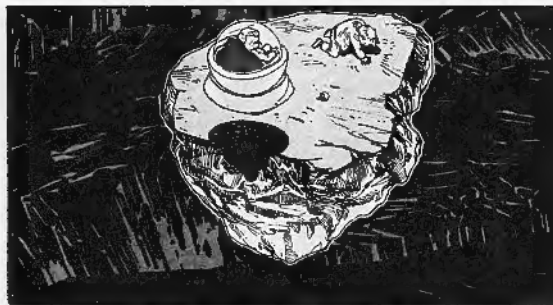
The Colonel



Masaru



Yamagata



area. During the course of the cataclysm, **Kaneda** is again separated from the resistance fighters, but he manages to intercept and hide a pill meant for **Takashi**, who is recaptured by the Colonel's men.

The next day, **Tetsuo** reappears in school, seemingly little the worse for his experiences. However, during the course of his treatment, it has come to the attention of **the Colonel** and his followers that **Tetsuo** has great psychic potential and would be a valuable asset to them.

Kaneda talks his girlfriend—who works in the school infirmary and keeps his entire band of delinquents supplied with drugs—into analyzing the drug intended for **Takashi**, and she tells him that it is similar in substance to what he and his friends take, but unbelievably concentrated and powerful.

Eager for action, **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** and their gang head out for a rumble with their chief rivals—the vicious **Clown** gang.



**Kaneda's
Girl Friend**



**Government
Soldier**



**Harukiya
Bartender**

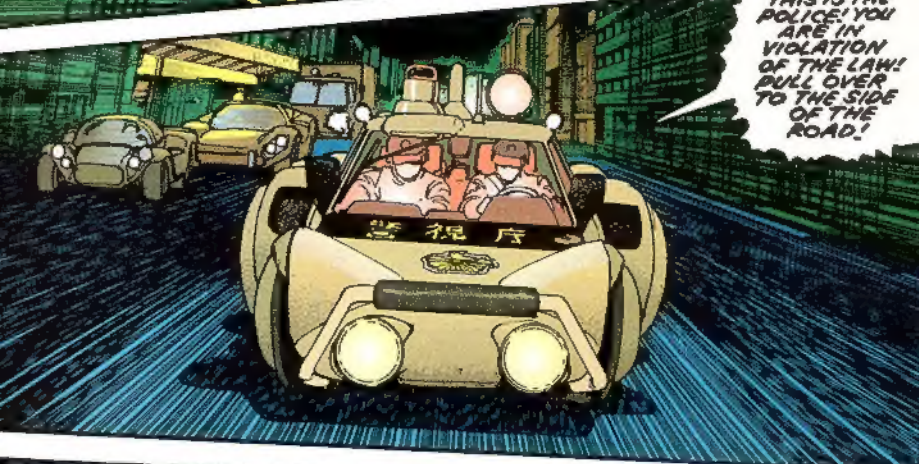


**Resistance
Agent**

AAAAA00000

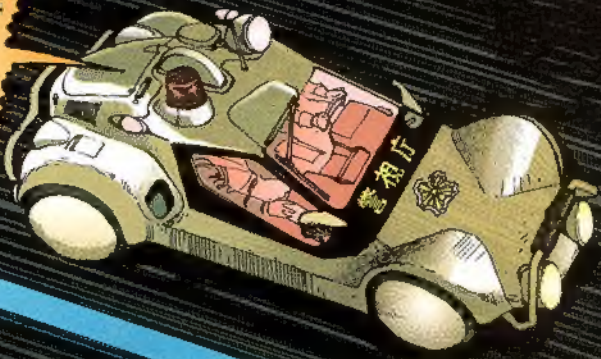
AAAAA00000

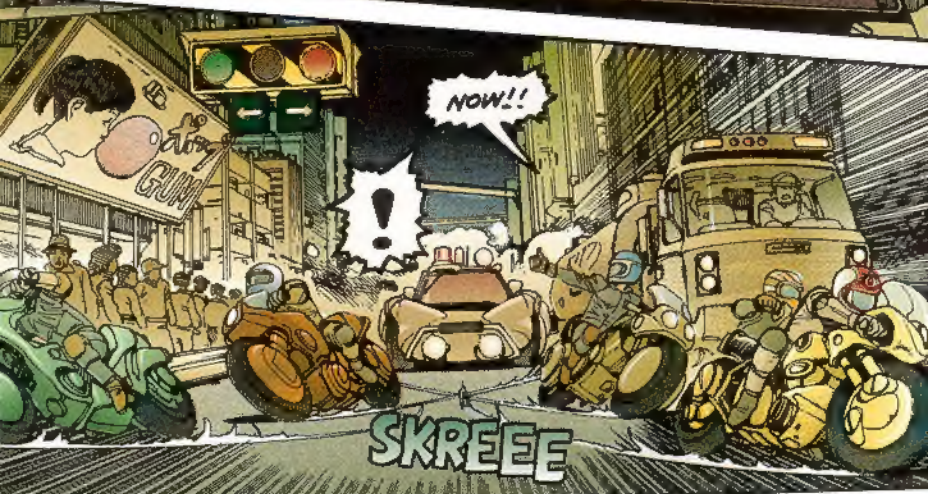
THIS IS THE POLICE! YOU ARE IN VIOLATION OF THE LAW! PULL OVER TO THE SIDE OF THE ROAD!



YOU WANNA BUST US, YOU HAVE TO WORK FOR IT!

THIS IS CAR #375. A BAND OF MOTORCYCLISTS DRIVING WITH EXTREME RECKLESSNESS IS HEADING SOUTH, AWAY FROM US, ON HIGHWAY #14. REQUEST OTHER VEHICLES TAKE POSITION TO INTERCEPT...





DRRRRRRN



HEH-HEH-HEH...
THIS IS GREAT!



HUNH?

ZZZZZZON

ZZZZZZON

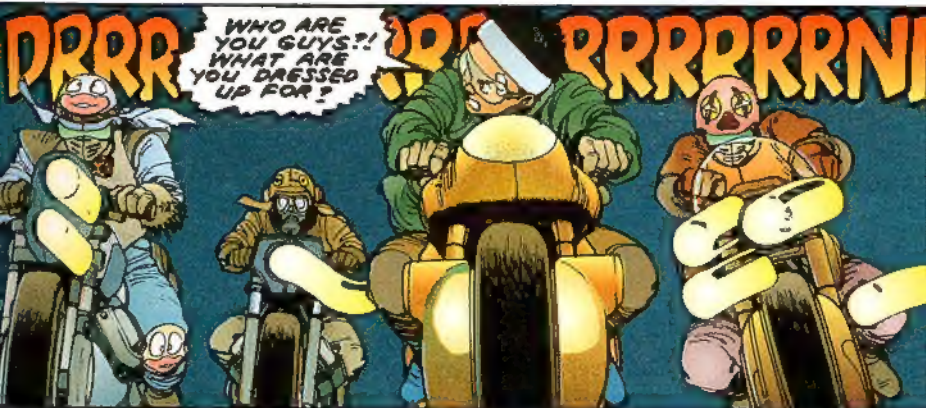


DRRR

WHO ARE
YOU GUYS?!!
WHAT ARE
YOU DRESSED
UP FOR?

DR

RRRRRRRN

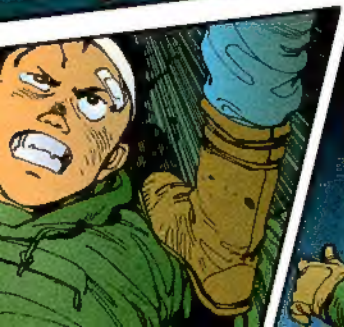
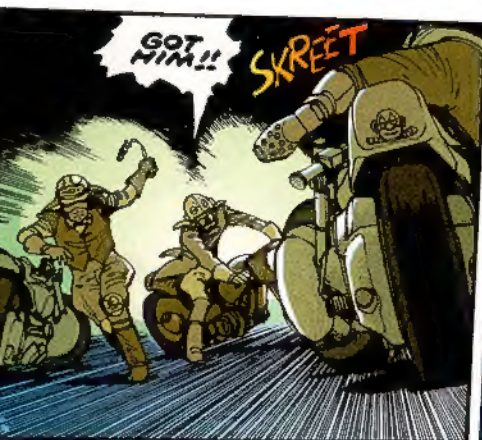


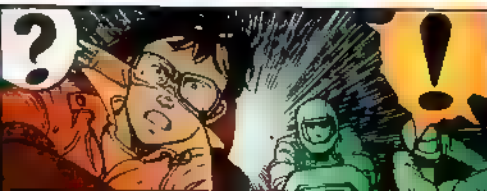
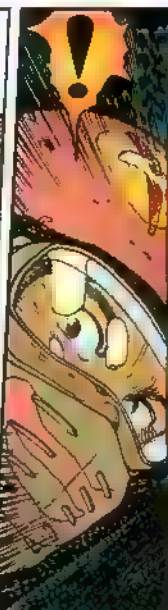
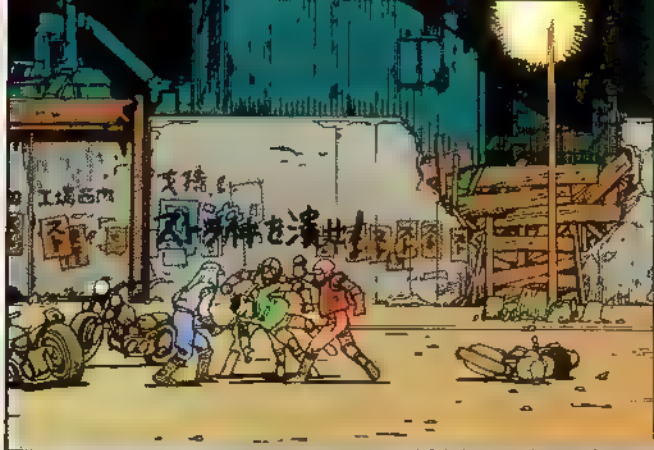
CHIK

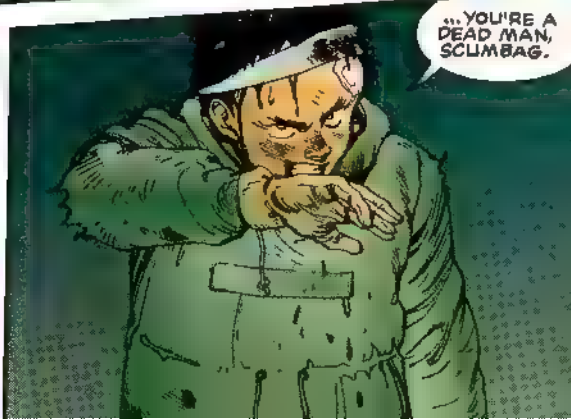
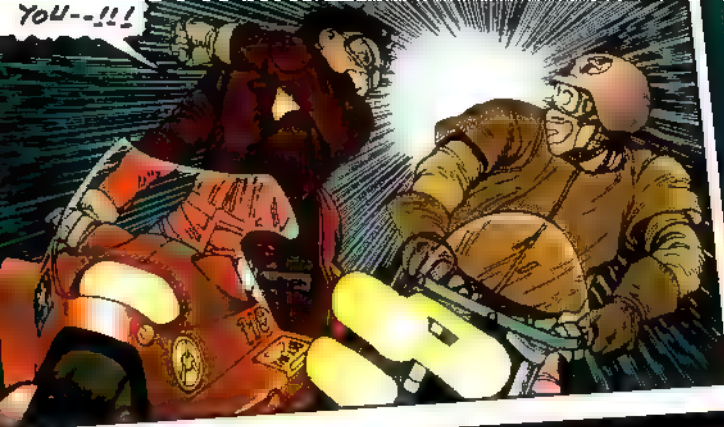


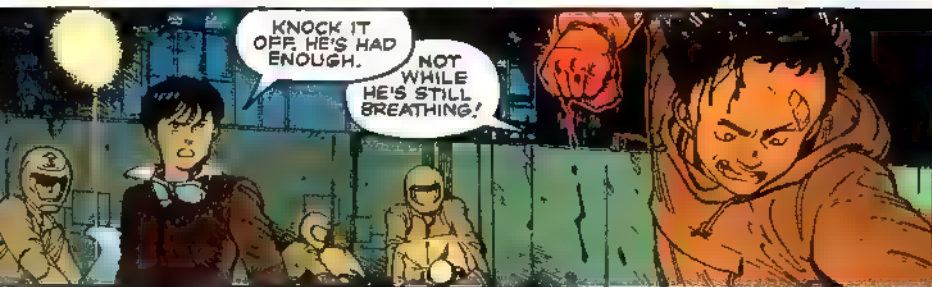
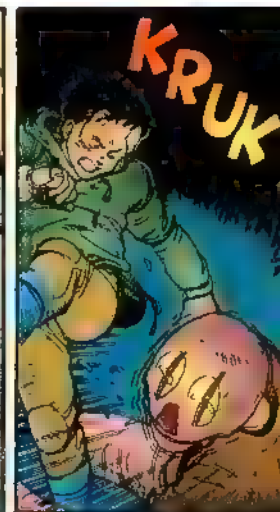
ACK

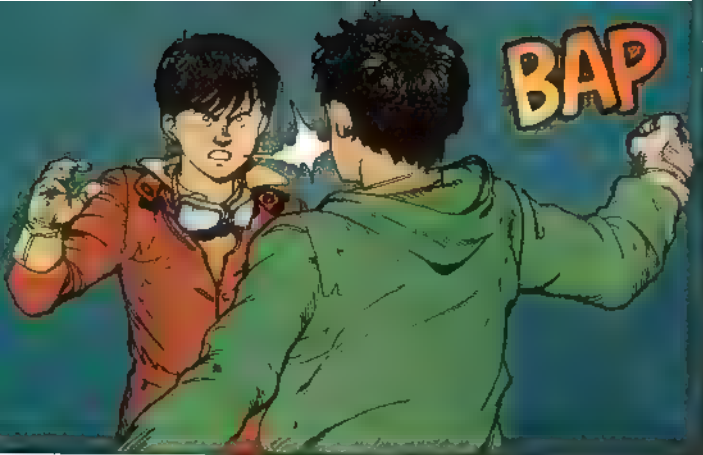
CHUNK



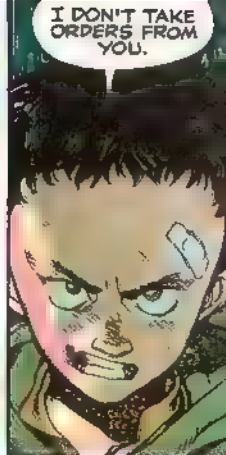








BAP



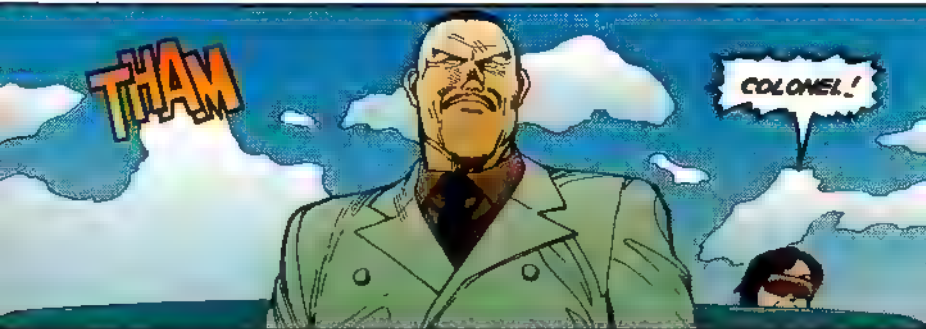
I DON'T TAKE
ORDERS FROM
YOU.



SAY
WHAT?!

I SAID I DON'T
TAKE ORDERS
FROM YOU,
KANEDA, YOU
GOT THAT?



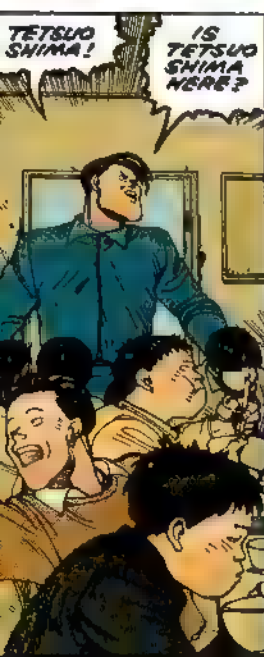
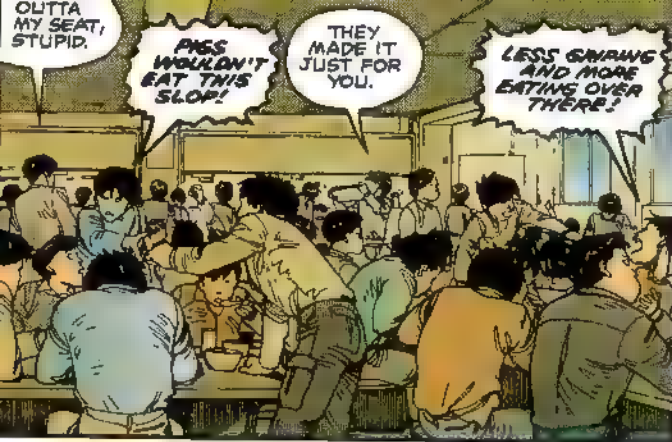


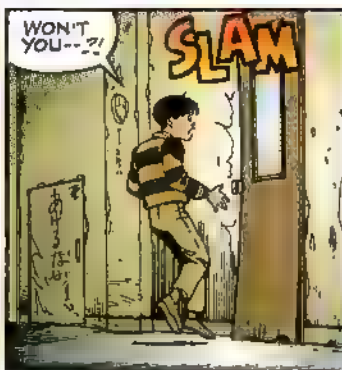
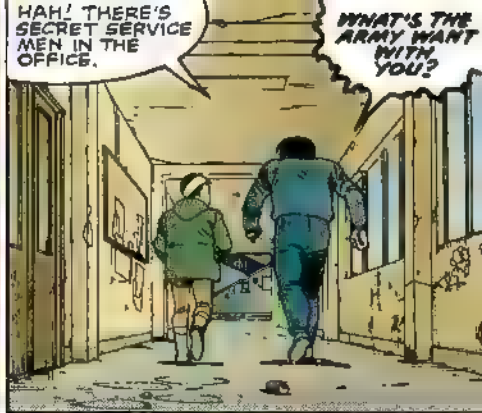
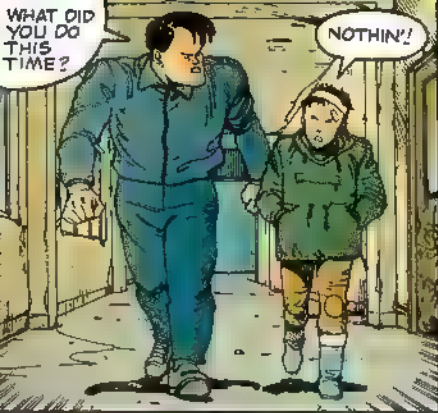
OUTTA
MY SEAT,
STUPID.

PSS
WOULDN'T
EAT THIS
SLOP!

THEY
MADE IT
JUST FOR
YOU.

LESS GRAWING
AND MORE
EATING OVER
THERE!

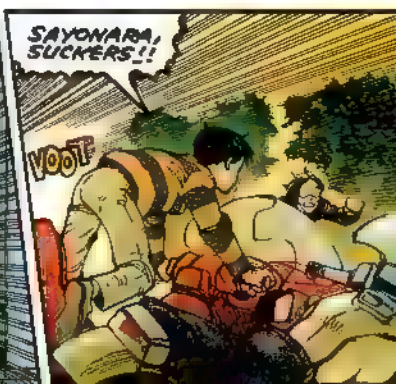
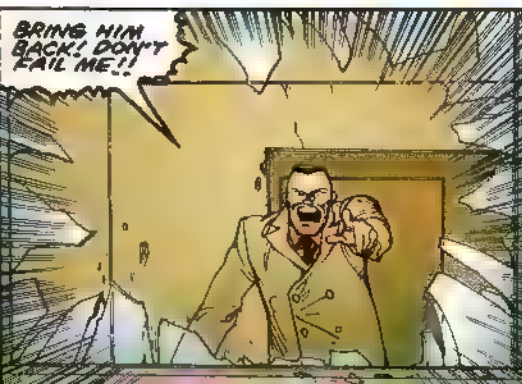
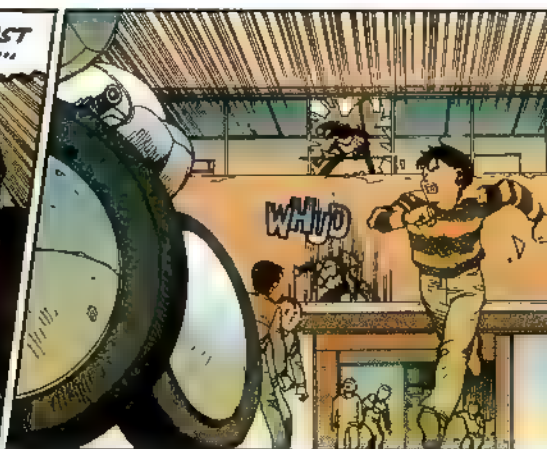
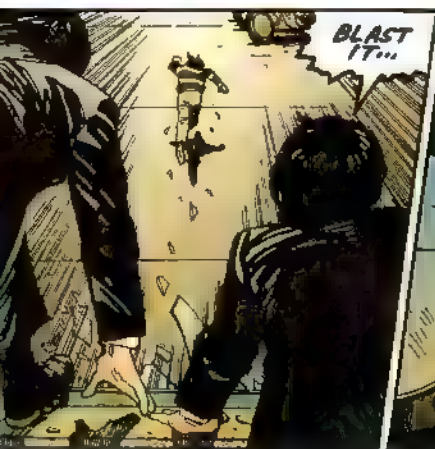


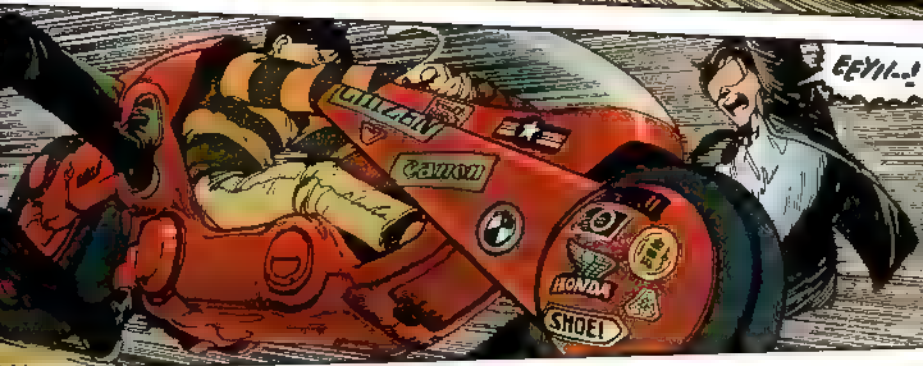


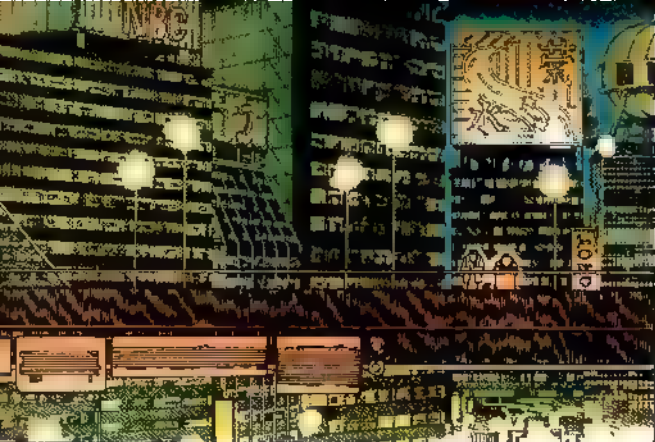
HEY! I WAS GONNA GO TO THE HOSPITAL LIKE YOU PEOPLE TOLD ME... WHAT'S THE MATTER? DON'T YOU TRUST ME?

EH...?

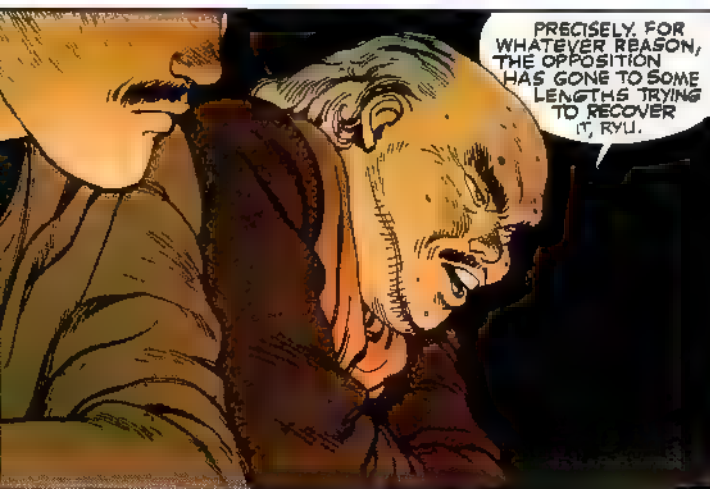








THE PILL...?



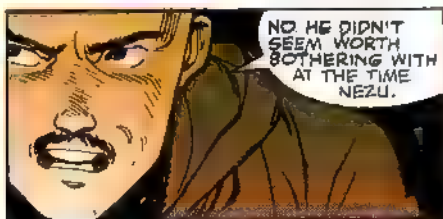
PRECISELY. FOR WHATEVER REASON, THE OPPOSITION HAS GONE TO SOME LENGTHS TRYING TO RECOVER IT, RYU.



THAT KID MADE OFF WITH IT IN ALL THE CONFUSION.



DO YOU KNOW HIS IDENTITY?



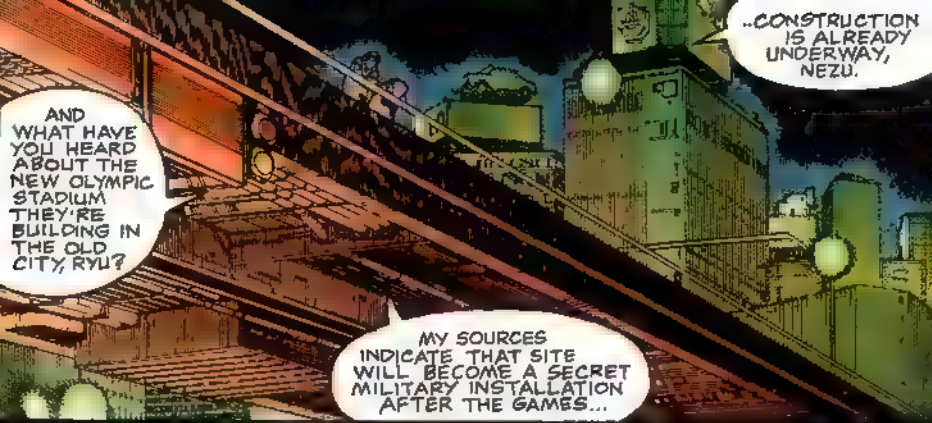
NO HE DIDN'T SEEM WORTH BOTHERING WITH AT THE TIME NEZU.



IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT WE LOCATE HIM.



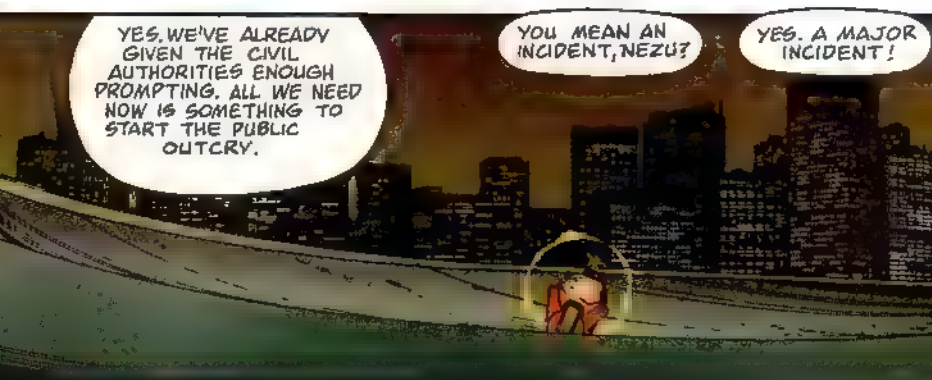
BUT--!
...BEFORE THE OTHER SIDE DOES



AND
WHAT HAVE
YOU HEARD
ABOUT THE
NEW OLYMPIC
STADIUM
THEY'RE
BUILDING IN
THE OLD
CITY, RYU?

...CONSTRUCTION
IS ALREADY
UNDERWAY,
NEZU.

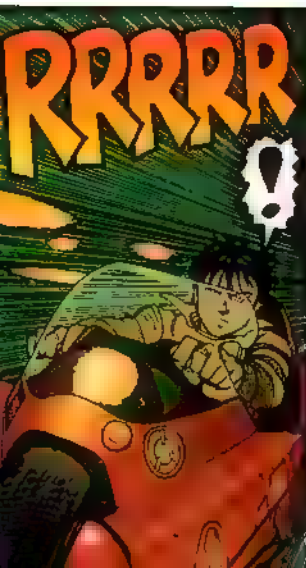
MY SOURCES
INDICATE THAT SITE
WILL BECOME A SECRET
MILITARY INSTALLATION
AFTER THE GAMES...



YES, WE'VE ALREADY
GIVEN THE CIVIL
AUTHORITIES ENOUGH
PROMPTING. ALL WE NEED
NOW IS SOMETHING TO
START THE PUBLIC
OUTCRY.

YOU MEAN AN
INCIDENT, NEZU?

YES. A MAJOR
INCIDENT!



RRRRRR

!



SITE OF THE 2031 TOKYO
OLYMPICS NO UNAUTHORIZED
VEHICLES ALLOWED



HAH!

**YOU
INCOMPETENT
IMBECILES!!**

WHAM

YESSIR!

**WE'RE
SORRY,
SIR!**

**NOT AS SORRY
AS YOU'LL BE
FOR FAILING
ME!**

creak

**NOW GET OUT
OF HERE!
YOU'RE
WASTING MY
TIME.**

**WHAT
WAS
THAT ALL
ABOUT?**

**NOTHING
THAT CONCERNS
YOU.**

**WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE WITH...
TETSUO SHIMA,
ISN'T THAT HIS
NAME?**

I'VE GIVEN HIM
A SEDATIVE TOMORROW,
WHEN HE WAKES UP, WE
CAN BEGIN INTENSIVE
EXAMINATIONS.

WHEN MAY
I EXPECT
YOUR
REPORT?

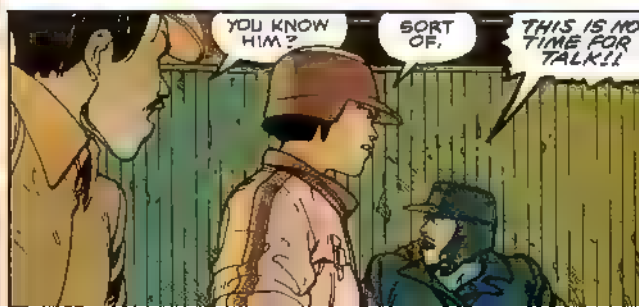
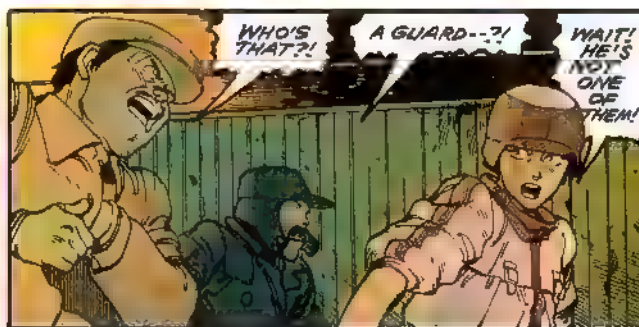
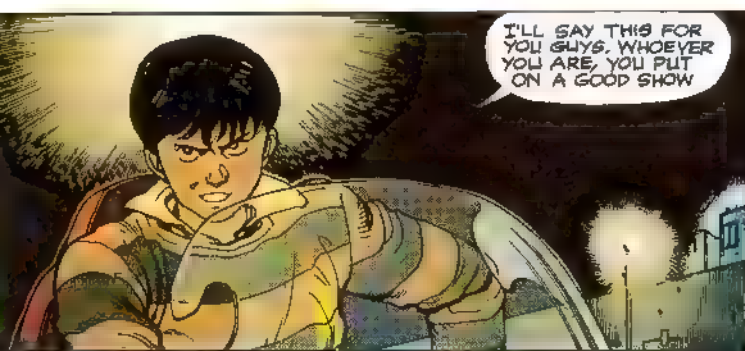
IT WILL TAKE ABOUT
THREE WEEKS TO
COMPILE ALL THE
DATA.

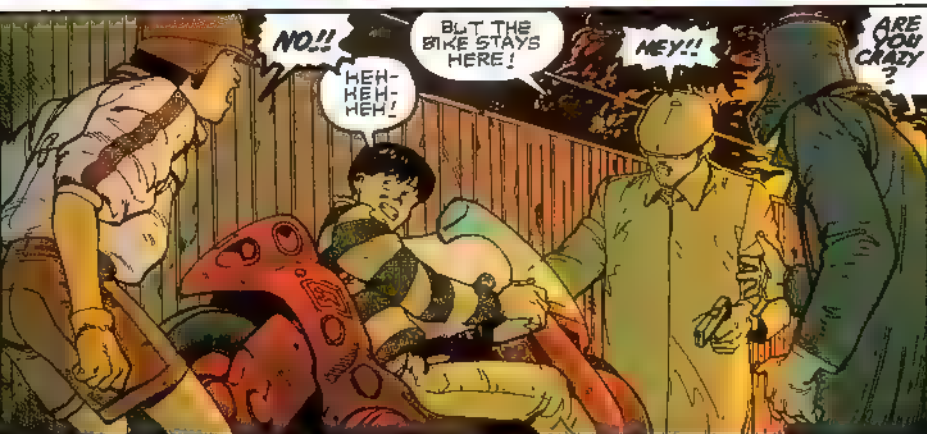
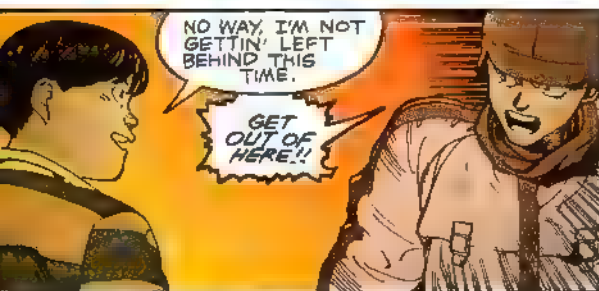
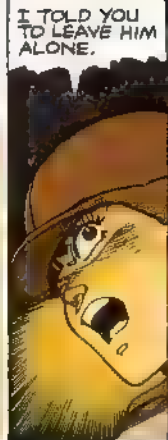
KROOM

WHAT...?!

IT
CAME FROM
THE OLD
CITY.

COULD IT
HAVE BEEN
THE OLYMPIC
SITE?



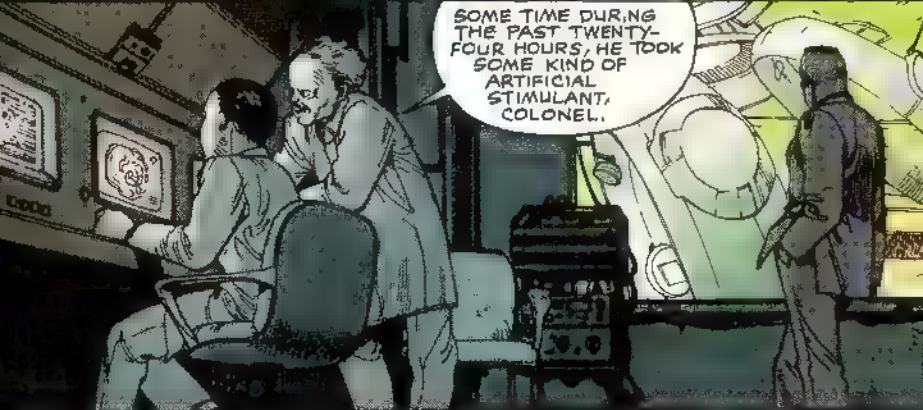


SHOULD BE. THIS IS A RESTRICTED AREA.

BUT THE LAST FEW DAYS, THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF TRAFFIC HERE.

SHHHH

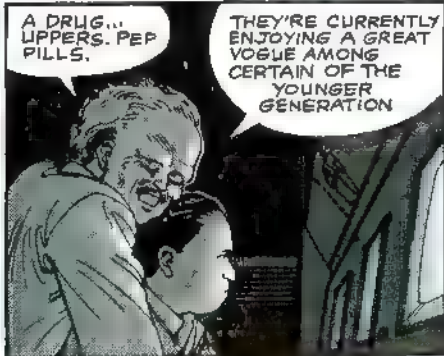
SHHHH



SOME TIME DURING
THE PAST TWENTY-
FOUR HOURS, HE TOOK
SOME KIND OF
ARTIFICIAL
STIMULANT,
COLONEL.

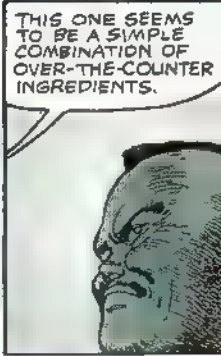


STIMULANT?



A DRUG...
UPPERS. PEP
PILLS.

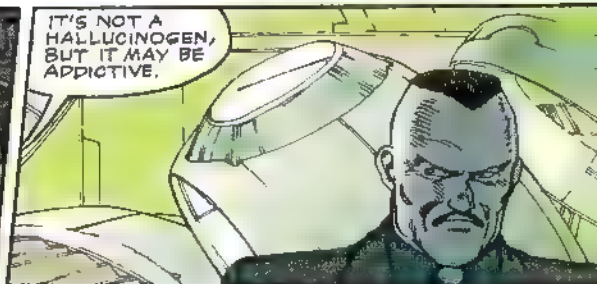
THEY'RE CURRENTLY
ENJOYING A GREAT
VOGUE AMONG
CERTAIN OF THE
YOUNGER
GENERATION



THIS ONE SEEMS
TO BE A SIMPLE
COMBINATION OF
OVER-THE-COUNTER
INGREDIENTS.



ANY REASONABLY
SKILLED
PHARMACIST
COULD
SYNTHESIZE
IT.



IT'S NOT A
HALLUCINOGEN,
BUT IT MAY BE
ADDICTIVE.



I BELIEVE IT
ACCOUNTS FOR
THE ALTERATION
OF THE BRAIN
WAVE PATTERN.



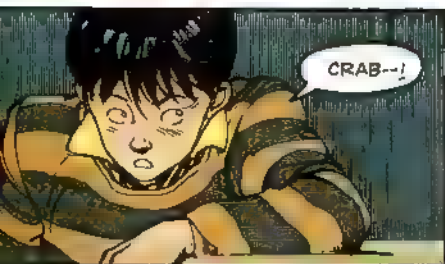
YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME IMMEDIATELY, KAY!

WE THOUGHT OUR REPORT TOOK PRECEDENCE.

ARE YOU SURE IT'S HIM?

DEFINITELY.

HERE?!



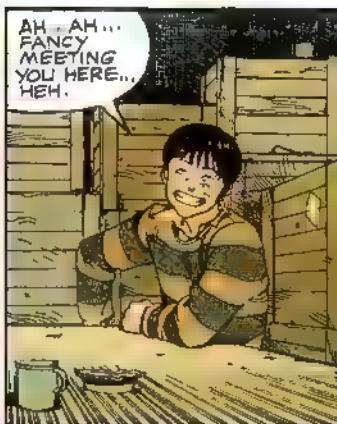
CRAB--!



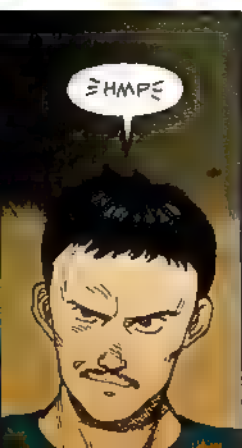
thump-thump-thump-thump



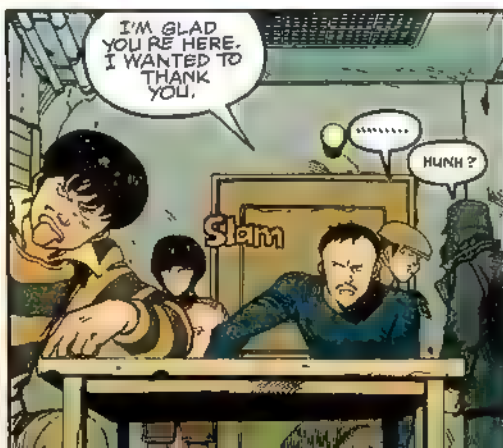
BAM



AH... AH... FANCY MEETING YOU HERE... HEH.



SHMP



I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE. I WANTED TO THANK YOU.

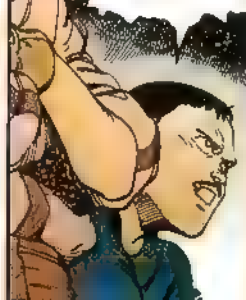
Slam

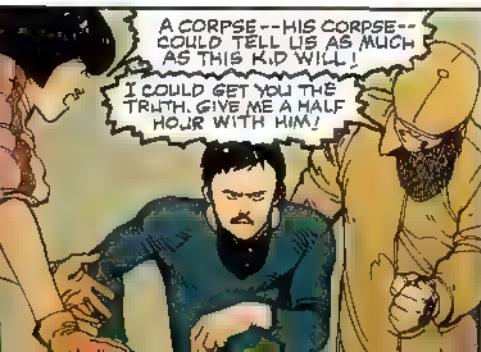
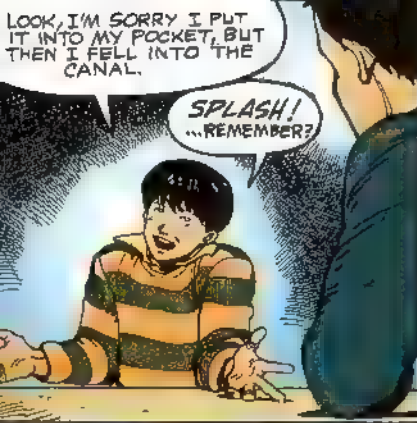
.....

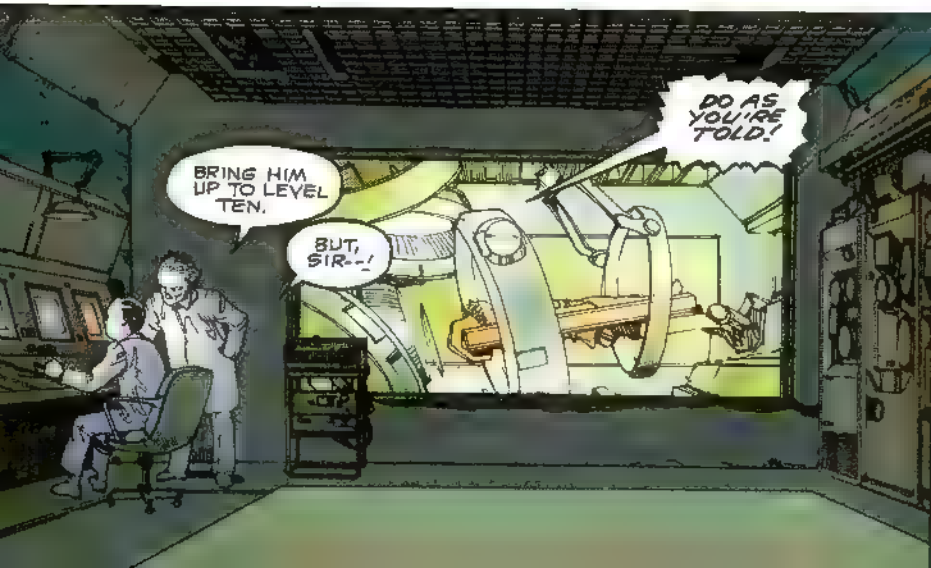
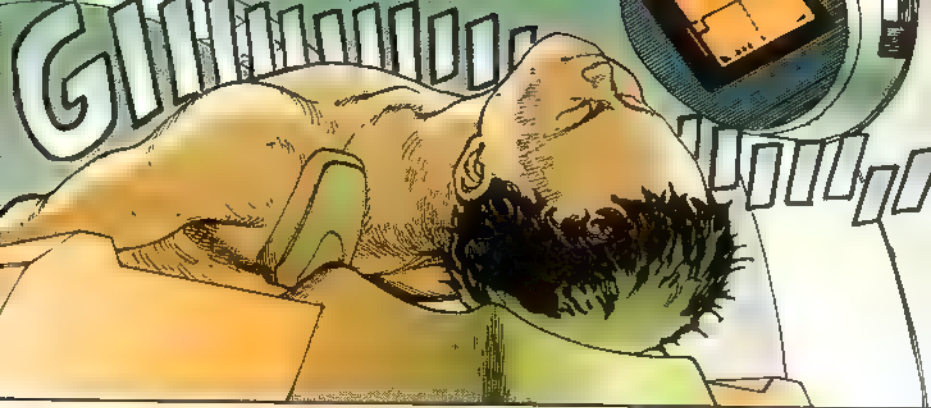
HUNH?

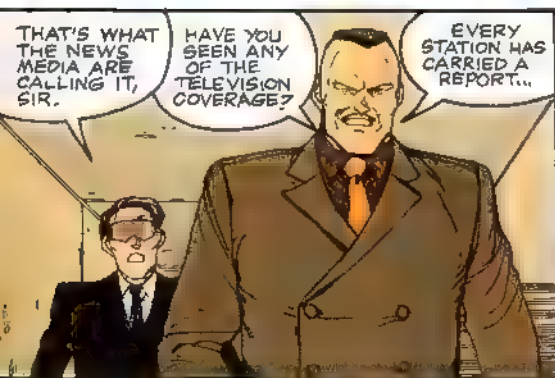
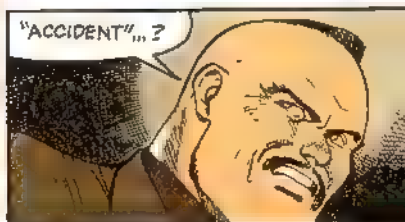
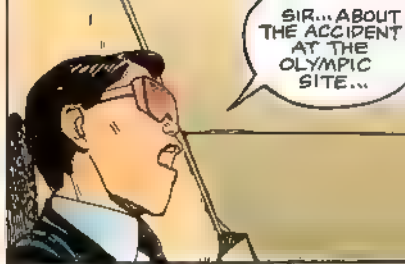
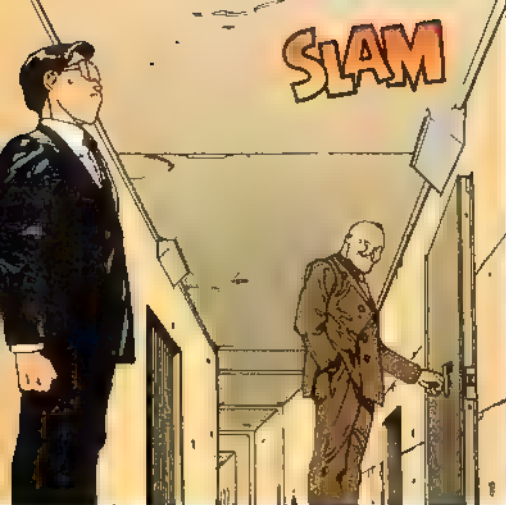


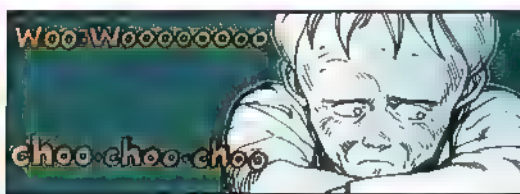
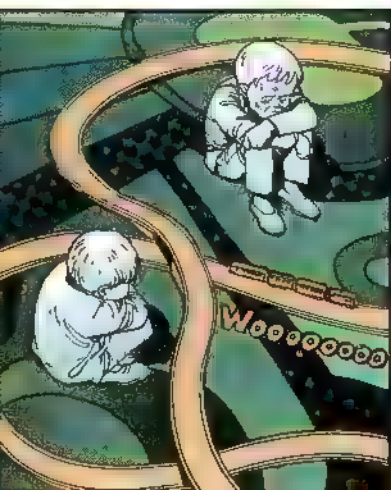
THANK...?

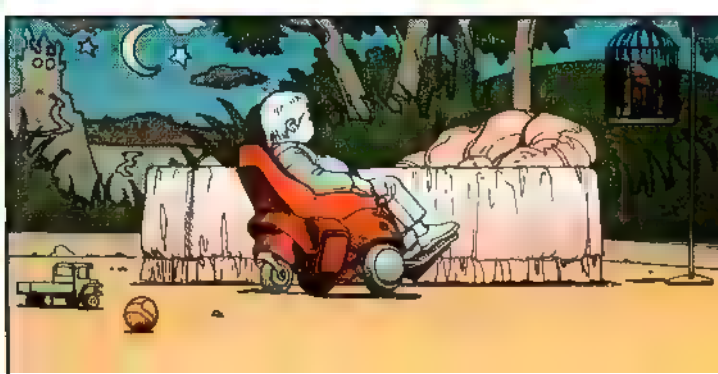
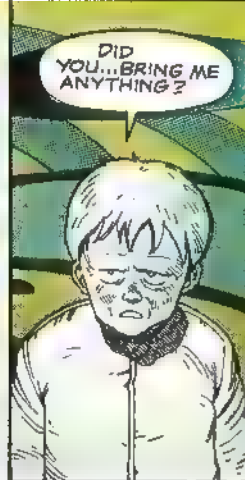


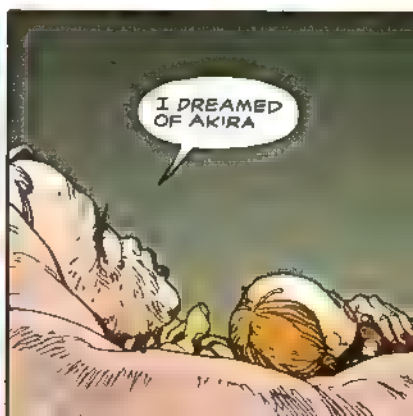
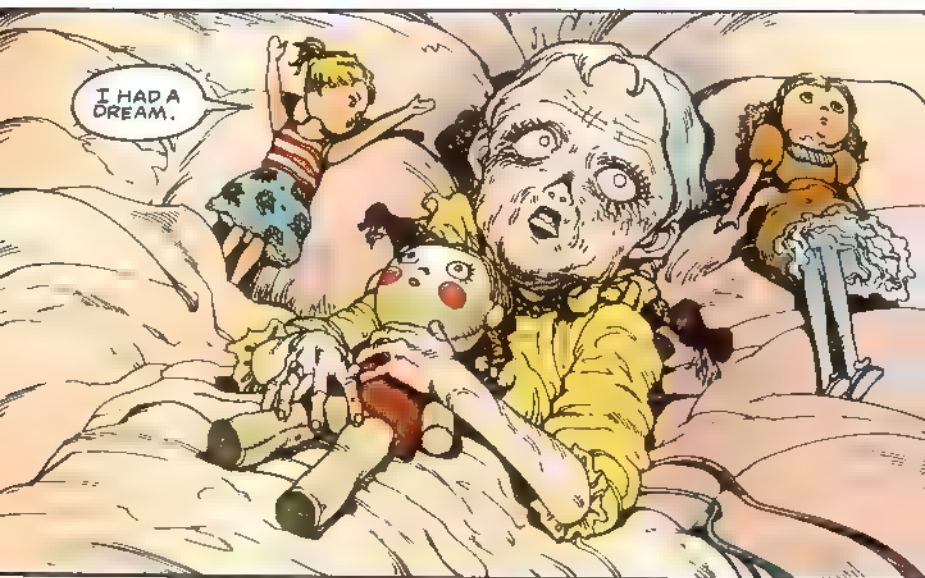
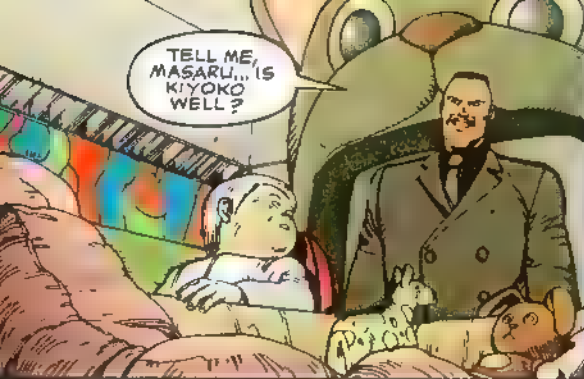


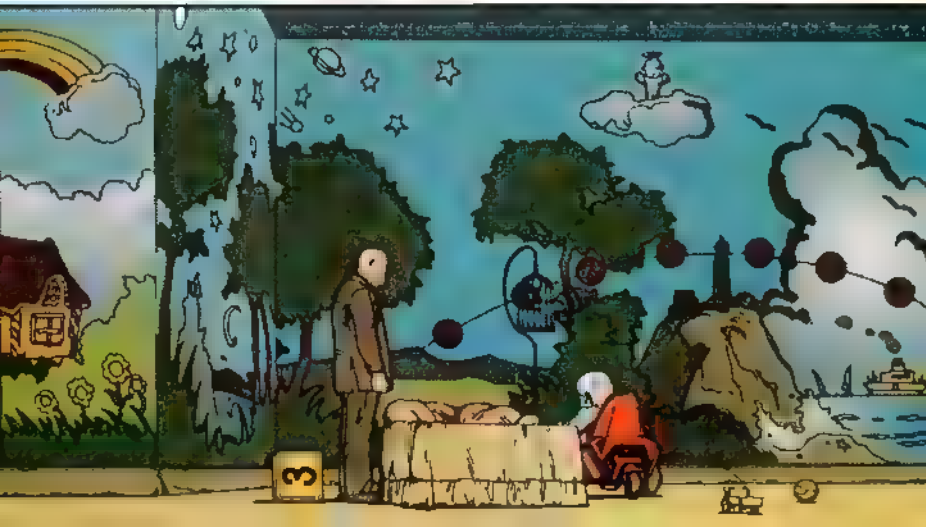
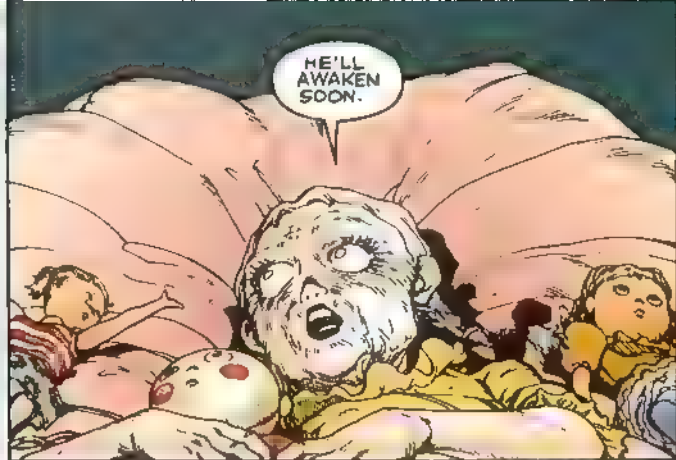


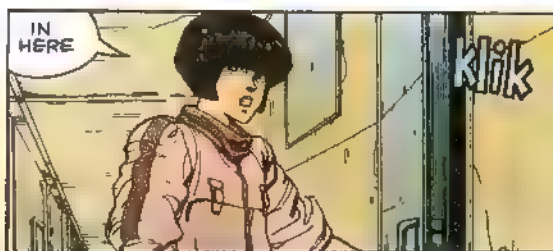


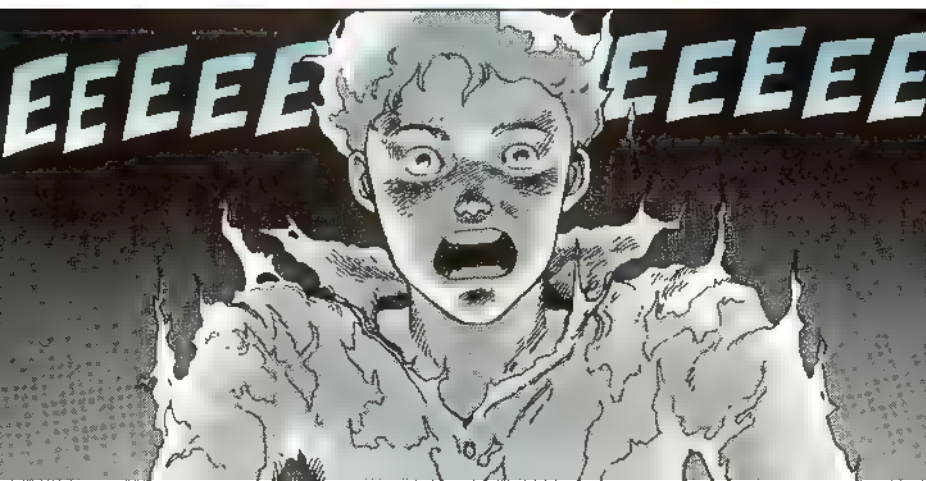


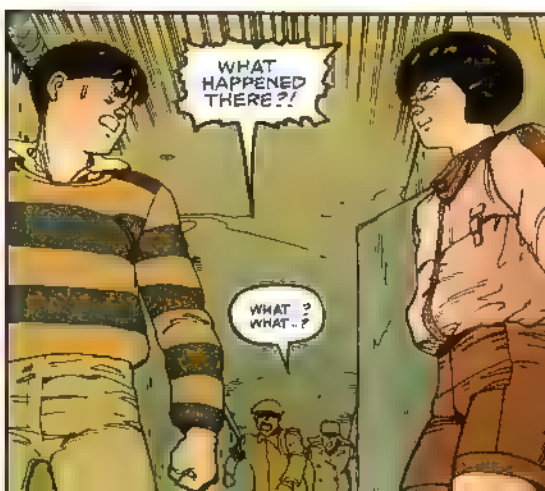


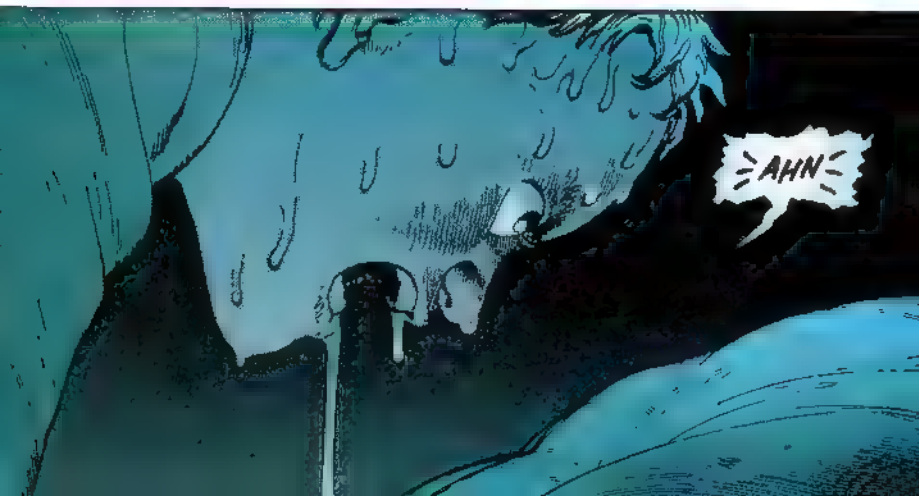
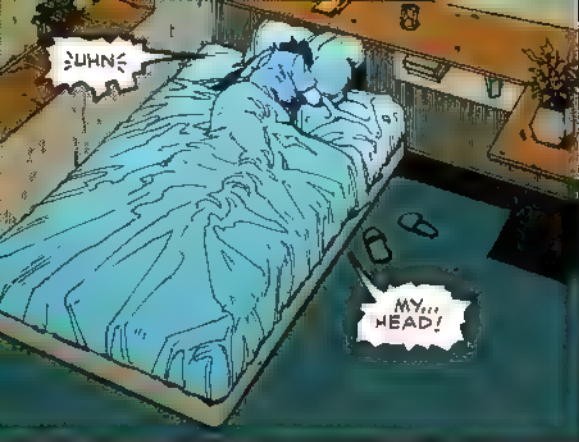


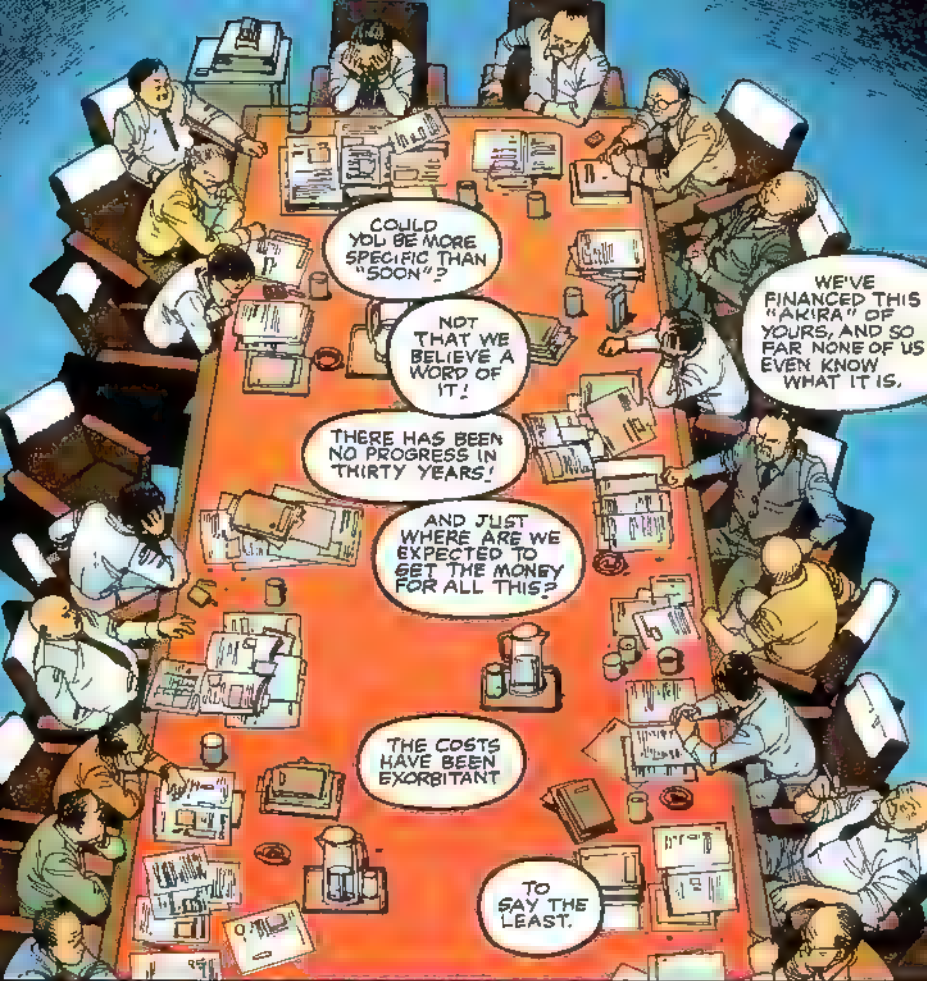












COULD
YOU BE MORE
SPECIFIC THAN
"SOON"?

NOT
THAT WE
BELIEVE A
WORD OF
IT!

THERE HAS BEEN
NO PROGRESS IN
THIRTY YEARS!

AND JUST
WHERE ARE WE
EXPECTED TO
GET THE MONEY
FOR ALL THIS?

THE COSTS
HAVE BEEN
EXORBITANT

TO
SAY THE
LEAST.

WE'VE
FINANCED THIS
"AKIRA" OF
YOURS, AND SO
FAR NONE OF US
EVEN KNOW
WHAT IT IS.

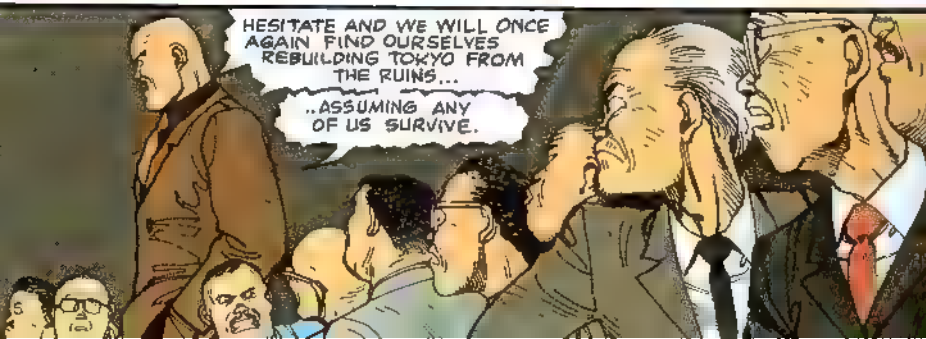
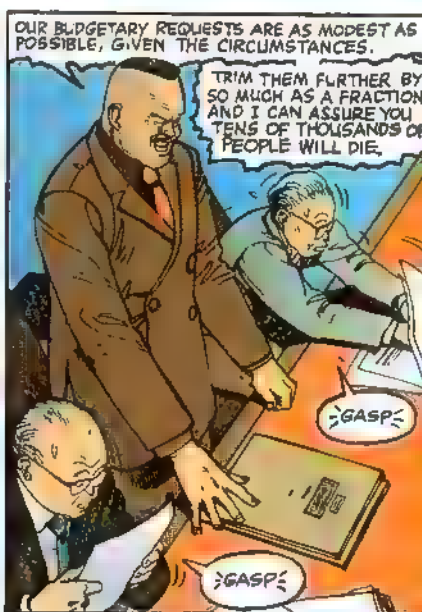
ALL WE HAVE TO
SHOW FOR OUR
EXPENDITURES IS
THAT GROTESQUE
NURSERY.

AND THERE ARE THE
UPCOMING OLYMPICS
TO CONSIDER. WE
MUST PUT THE WAR
AND ITS MEMORIES
BEHIND US. WE HAVE
NO MONEY TO SPEND
ON GHOSTS

THAT'S WHAT
I'VE SAID ALL
ALONG!

THE MONEY
COULD HAVE
GONE TO
WELFARE.

SHUT
UP!





AKIRA?!



THAT'S
WHAT HE
SAID.



NOT YOUR
RUN-OF-THE-MILL
VISITOR, WAS
HE?



IT WAS WEIRD...
BIZARRE...



YOU'RE CERTAIN
IT WASN'T A
HOLOGRAM?

NO... IT
WAS A...
A PRESENCE. I
FELT
HIM



COULD IT
HAVE BEEN
THE KID'S
DOING?

I DON'T THINK SO.
HE WAS SCARED
TOO. IT SEEMED
SOME WAY
SIMILAR TO
TAKASHI'S ENERGY,
AND YET...
DIFFERENT.

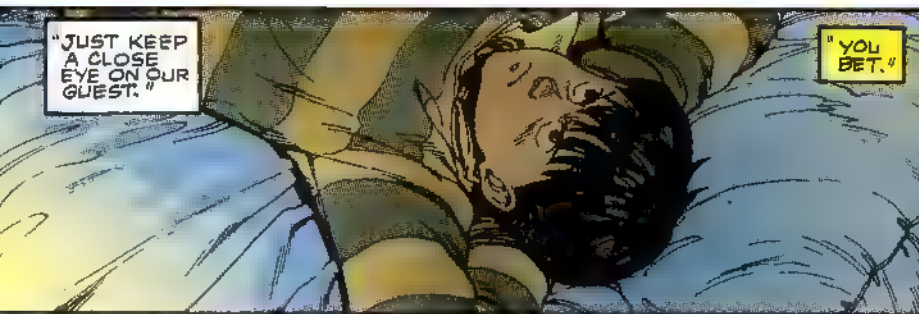


DIFFERENT...?



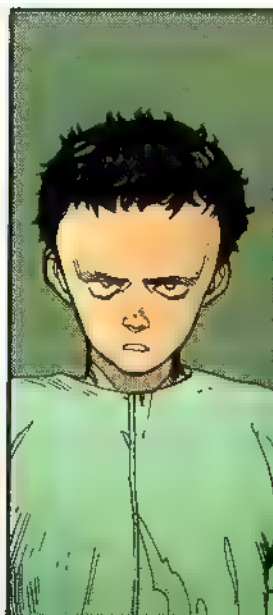
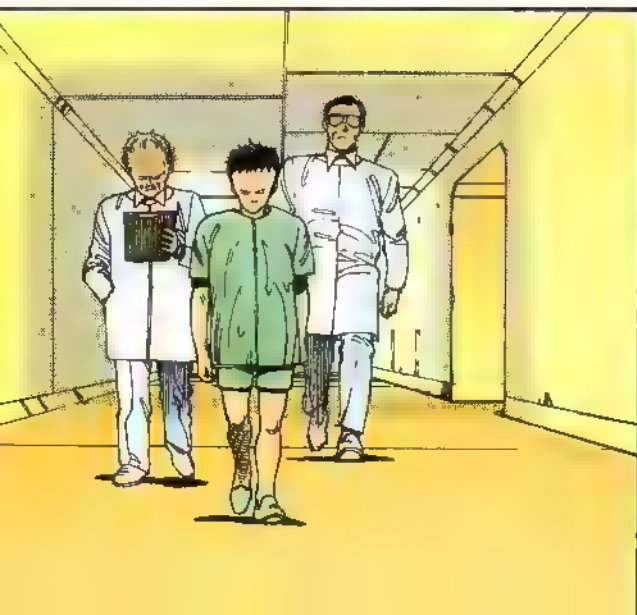
"AKIRA...?"

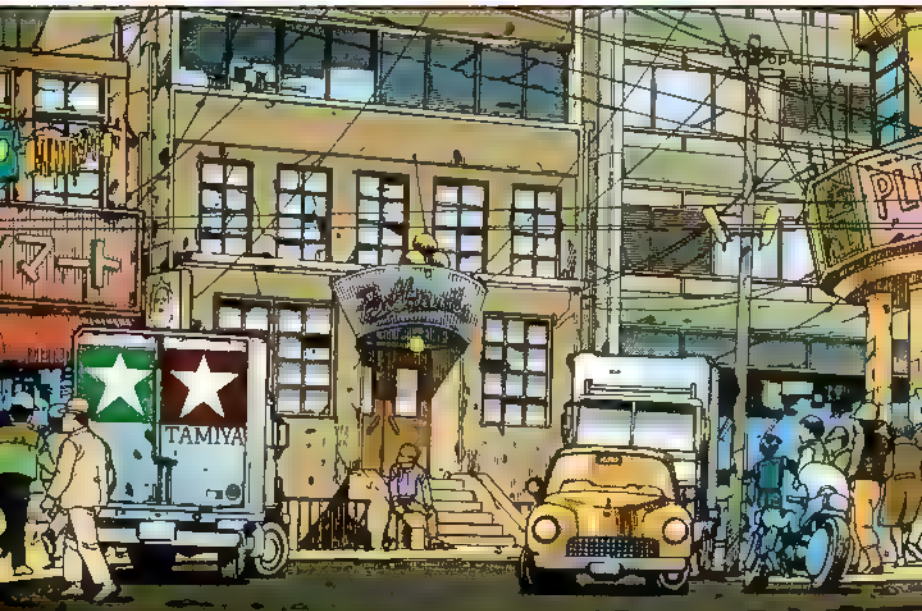
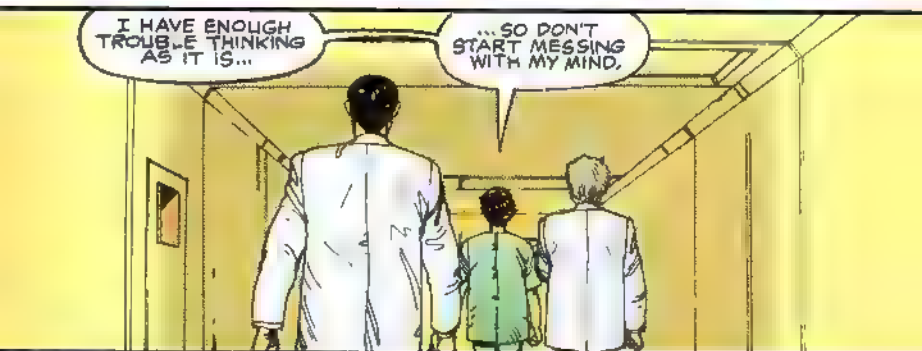
"DON'T ASK ME

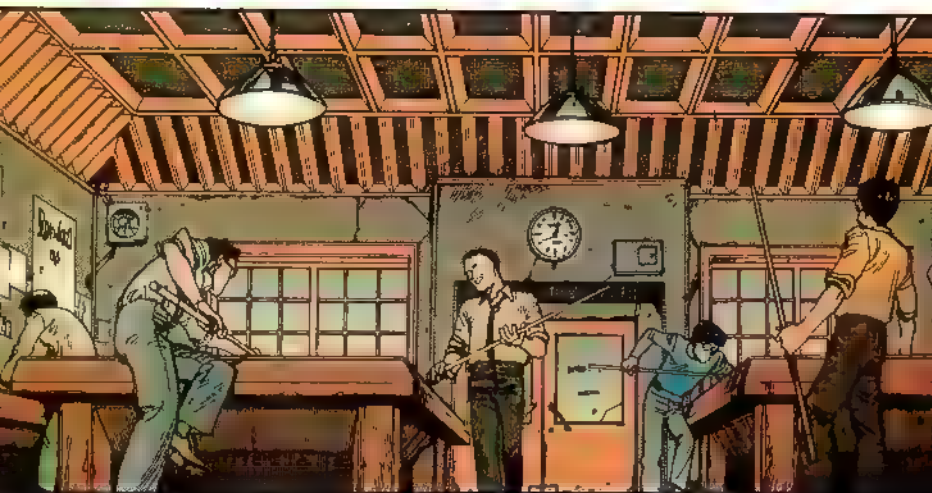


"JUST KEEP
A CLOSE
EYE ON OUR
GUEST."

"YOU
BET."









A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER...?

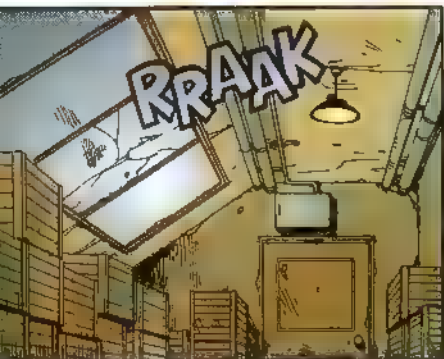


THINK HE'S A SECRET SERVICE BLOODMOUND?

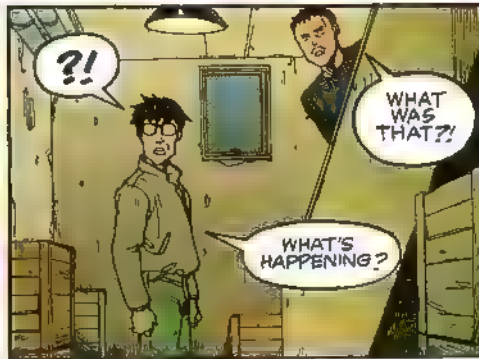
HE'S NOT LISTED IN OUR FILES, BUT MAYBE HE JUST JOINED THEM.



HE'S BEEN HANGING AROUND FOR THE LAST WEEK



RRAAK



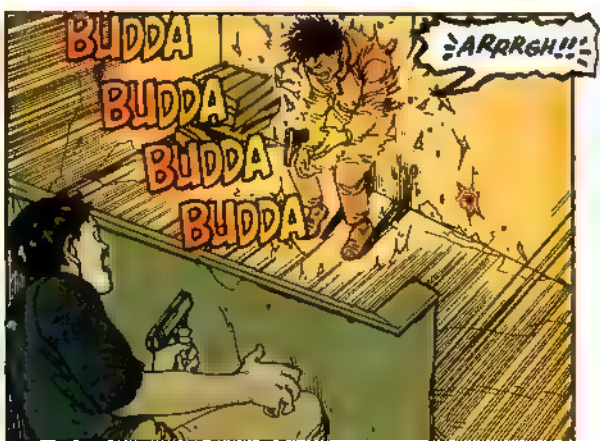
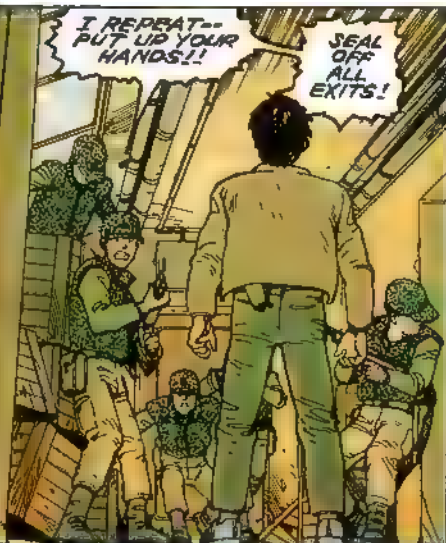
?!

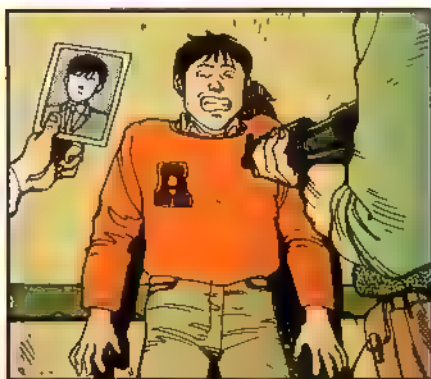
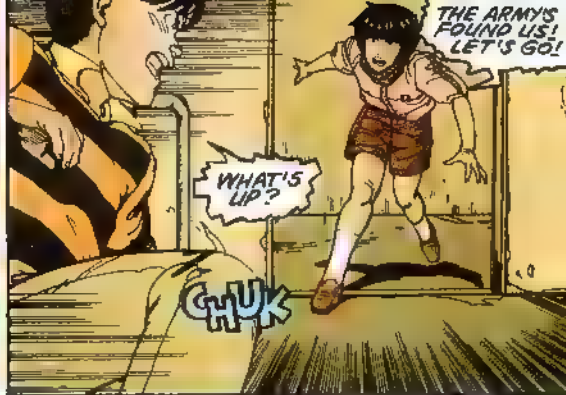
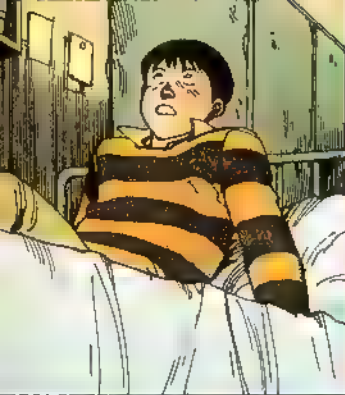
WHAT WAS THAT?!

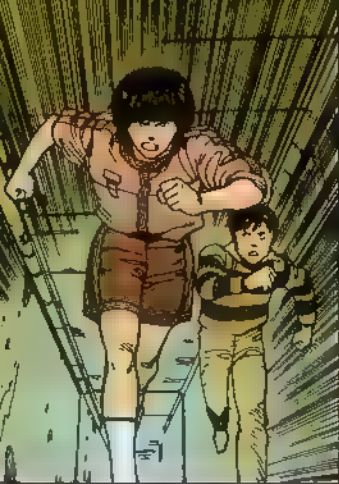
WHAT'S HAPPENING?



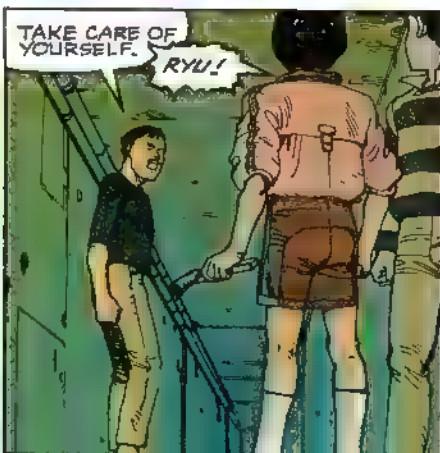
KRASH

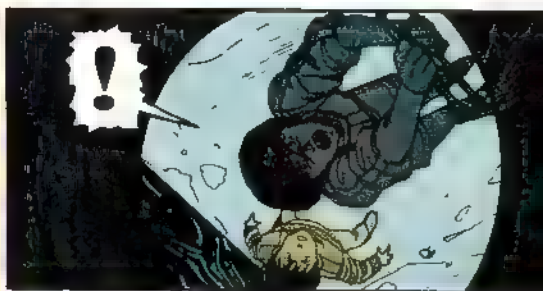
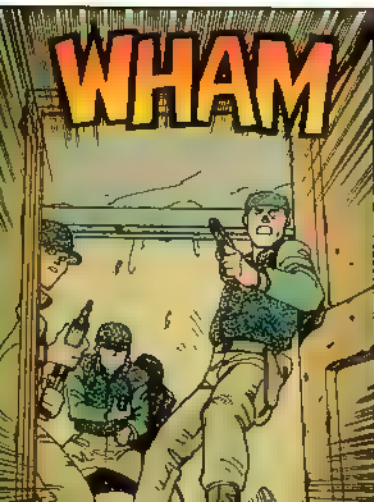
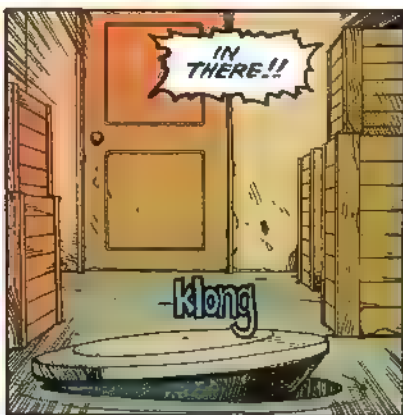
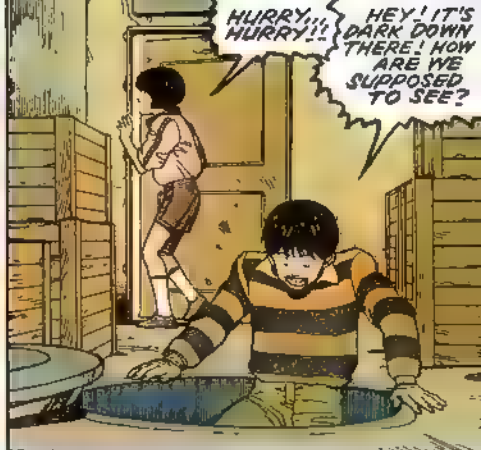


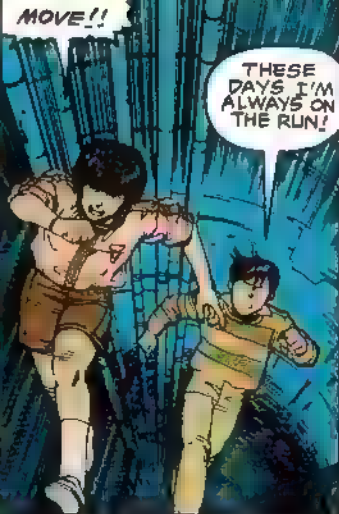


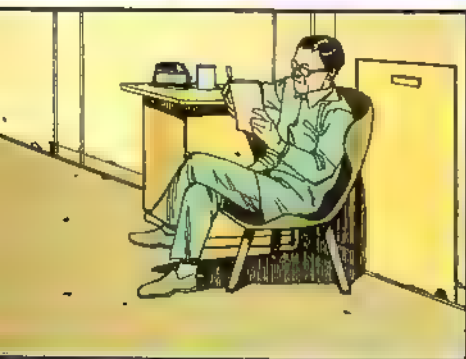
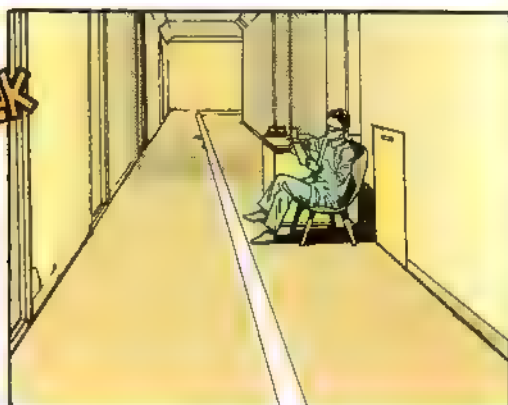
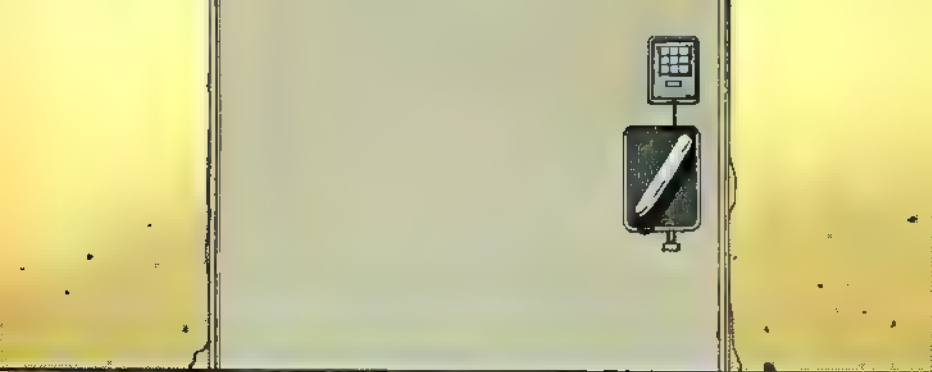


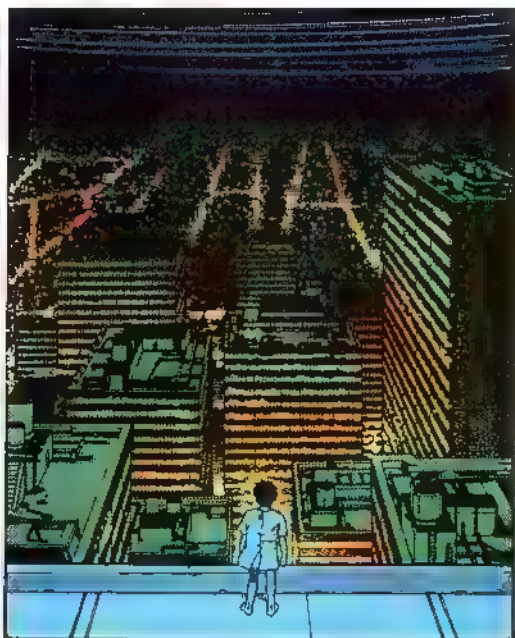
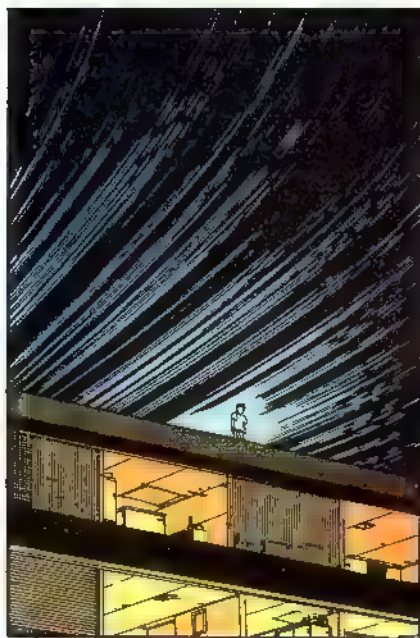
UNDERGROUND!

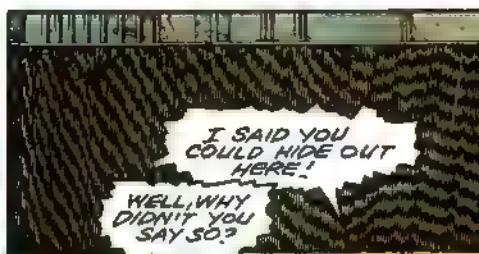
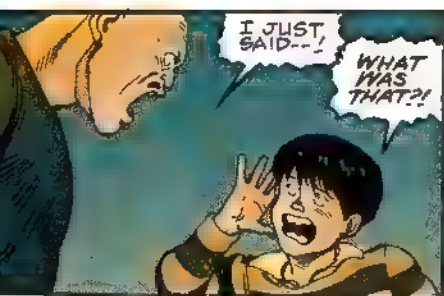
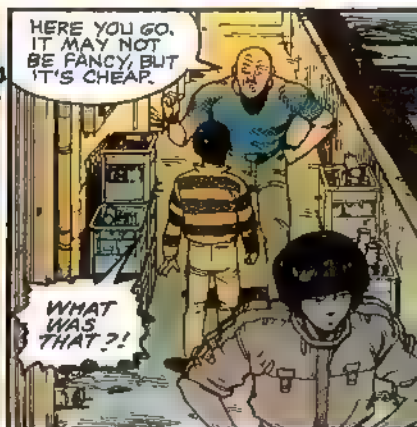


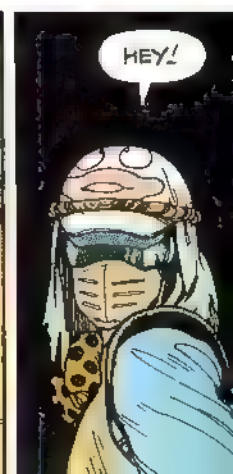
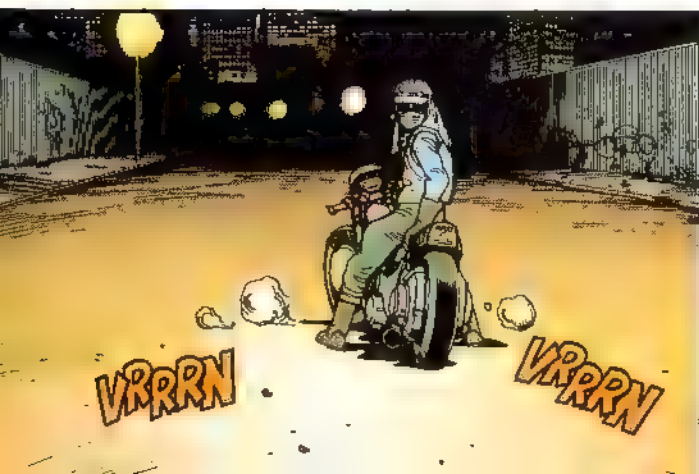






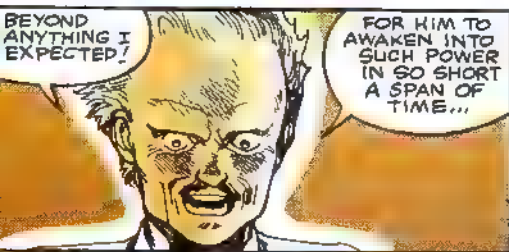








YOUR
OPINION?

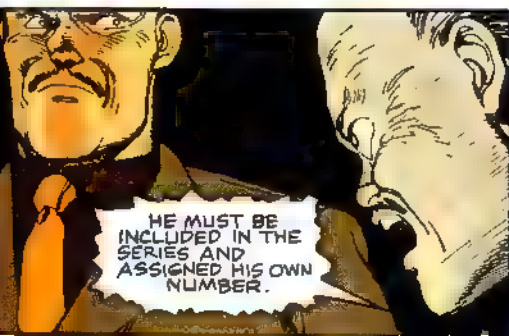


BEYOND
ANYTHING I
EXPECTED!

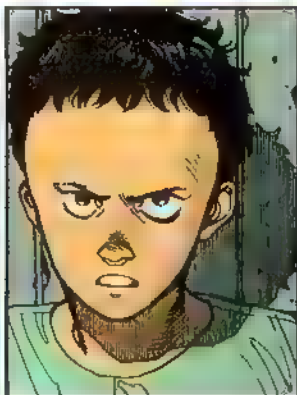
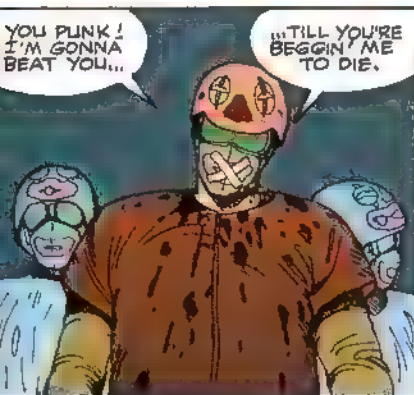
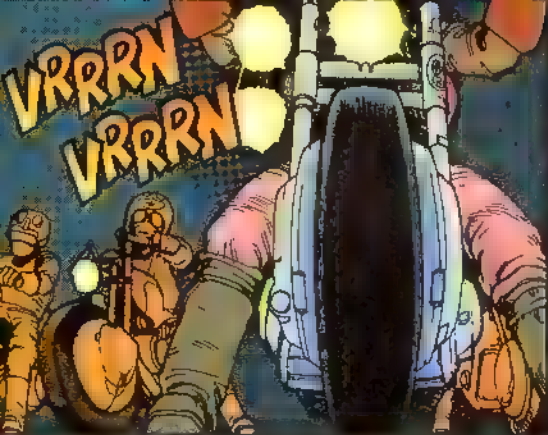
FOR HIM TO
AWAKEN INTO
SUCH POWER
IN SO SHORT
A SPAN OF
TIME...

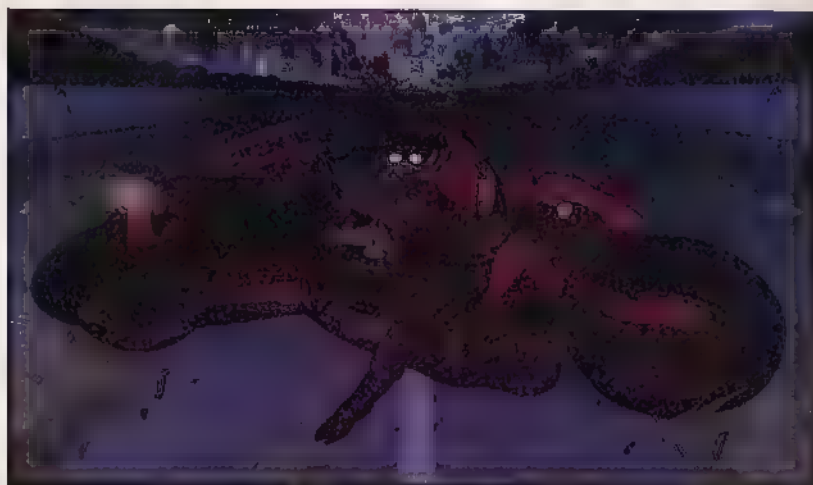


I BELIEVE
#41 IS THE
NEXT AVAILABLE
DESIGNATION...?



HE MUST BE
INCLUDED IN THE
SERIES AND
ASSIGNED HIS OWN
NUMBER.





AKIRA

THE ANIMATED MOVIE

Kaneda Tetsuo, and the rest of *Akira's* large cast have sprung into life and incredible motion. Katsuhiro Otomo has brought his post World War III epic from the comics to full animation in a feature film produced through the partnership of Kodansha Ltd., Mainichi Broadcasting System, Inc., Bandai Co., Ltd., Hakuhodo Incorporated, Toho Co., Ltd.; Laserdisc Corporation; Sumitomo Corporation; and Tokyo Movie Shinsha Co., Ltd.

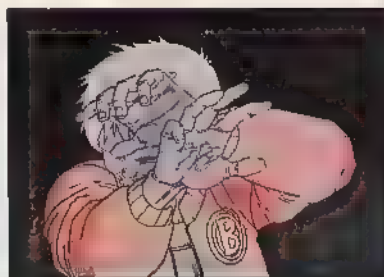


Otomo at Tokyo's Imperial Hotel for the press conference announcing the production of the film.



In the United States, when a comic book or comic strip is turned into a film, the original creator's involvement will usually be limited to a consulting role. At times not even that. The final result which appears in theaters or on videotape often bears small resemblance to the creation it was based upon. No one can say that of the film version of *Akira*, which had its premiere in Tokyo on July 16th.

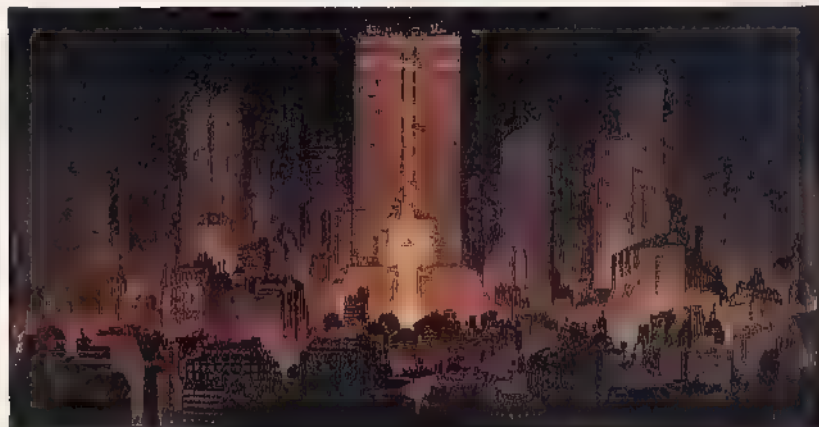
Katsuhiro Otomo has successfully managed the triple feat of handling the story, the screenplay (in cooperation with Izo Hashimoto), and the direction of the movie. In addition, Otomo also did the film's storyboards, taking six months off from his work on the comics feature in order to complete this important phase of production which sets into place the story's visual and narrative flow.



Can a saga designed for 1800 pages of comics fit into two hours of onscreen time? Otomo has boldly reconstructed the comic's storyline (not yet completed) keeping the same theme, but striving for greater simplicity to allow for full cinematic effect and to avoid the feeling of merely doing a 'digest version' of the comic book.

Visually, Otomo admires the fluid quality of the best Disney animation and has generated over 160,000 animation cells (a half hour of TV animation utilizes about 4000 cells) to achieve the results he wanted. An epic approach for an epic in animation.

Above: the animated Takashi, Number 26.
Below: the Laboratory Building rises in the center of the Neo-Tokyo cityscape.



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editorial assistant

Threads. Slowly intertwining. Coming together. Twisting tighter. The construction site for the coming Olympic games in post World War II Neo-Tokyo is rocked by an explosion, the work of anti-government rebels, in a secret government project controlled by the man known only as the Colonel, a wizened-faced child-woman awakens from a dream. Her dream is of someone called AKIRA. She dreams he will soon arise. On the streets, the young delinquent, Kaneda, object of government pursuit and rebel scrutiny, finds his authority over the motorcycle gang he leads suddenly challenged. The challenger is his friend, Tetsuo, who, following a mysterious highway accident, seems to be changing. Growing distant. Growing strange. Threads, Twisting, Tighter. Tighter until... something must break.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S



12



This scan produced by:

X-FUTURE

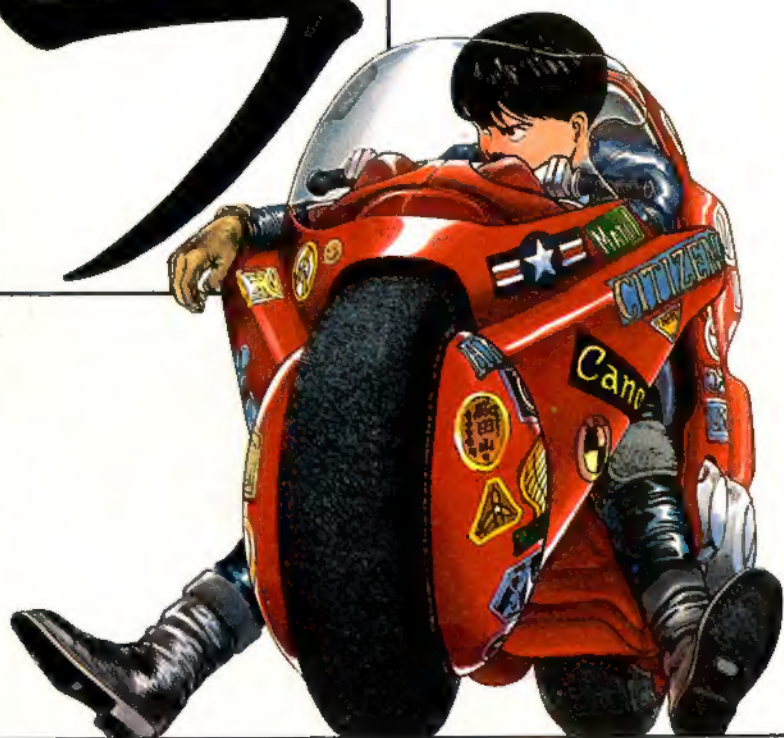
I love um

I buy um

I preserve um

キア

ラ





A full-body illustration of Tetsuo Shima, a character from the manga Akira. He is standing with a serious expression, wearing a yellow trench coat over a black shirt and black leather pants. He has black hair and is wearing black gloves and boots. His right arm is crossed over his chest. Behind him is a large, stylized green Japanese character 'アキラ' (Akira).

AKIRA

BY

KATSUHIRO
O T O M O